**Exploration of new oil and gas reserves**

†* 140. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ONGC has found some new oil and gas reserves within the country and in coastal regions of the country in May, 2007;

(b) if so, the names of States where these oil and gas reserves have been found; and

(c) by when these oil and gas reserves could be utilized commercially?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): Yes, Sir. During the month of May, 2007, Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) has made six new oil and gas discoveries, *viz.,* two each in Assam and Gujarat and one each in Tripura and Andhra Pradesh.

Out of these, two oil and gas discoveries in the states of Assam have been put on production as the required surface facilities/infrastructure were available near the discovery wells. Remaining four discoveries are at various stages of delineation/ appraisal.

The time taken for development of oil & gas discoveries is normally about 3 to 8 years depending upon the location of discovery, availability of infrastructure and markets in and around the discovery area.

**WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS**

**Direct flight from far East countries to Delhi and Gaya**

899. KUMARI NIRMALA DESHPANDE : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that tourists and pilgrims from the far East countries and specially China are interested in visiting India, but there are hardly any air connections;

(b) if so, whether there is any plan to connect Beijing, Shanghai, Taipeh and Tokyo directly to Delhi and to Gaya to facilitate the tourists and pilgrims; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) For tourists and pilgrims interested in visiting India from China, there is direct connectivity by air from Beijing and Shanghai to Delhi.

(b) and (c) Beijing, Shanghai, Taipei and Tokyo are already connected by air to Delhi. However there is no direct connectivity from these points to Gaya. The designated airlines of China and Japan have the facility under the existing arrangements with India to choose Gaya as a point of call for commencement of air services as per their commercial judgement. Tourists and pilgrims can however utilize

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.